(c) and (d) The National Forest Policy 1988 already recognizes people's participation in forestry as one of the main ingredients for protection and development of forests. The Ministry of Environment and Forests has already issued guidelines in June 1990 to States and Union Territories to involve local village communities in protection, management and development of forests on the principle of "care and share" within a broad framework of Joint Forest Management (JFM). The JFM programme is presently being implemented in 28 States with involvement of 99,868 JFM committees covering an area of approximately 21.44 million hectares as on 31.3.2005. The Ministry is also implementing National Afforestation Programme (NAP) Scheme during the Tenth Five Year Plan to further strengthen and operationalise JFM for rehabilitation of degraded forests and adjoining areas. The Scheme is being implemented through a two tier decentralized setup of Forest Development Agency (FDA) at the Forest Division level and Joint Forest Management Committees (JFMCs) at the village level. As on 31.3.2006, 715 FDA projects have been operationalized in 28 States to treat a total project area of 9.24 lakh hectares through 23,750 JFMCs.

Classification of industrial and construction projects

3723. SHRI SITARAM YECHURY: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government under environmental impact assessment codifications, classified various industrial and construction projects into A/B and B categories;

(b) if so, the scientific and technical basis for this classification;

(c) whether provisions have been made for the relaxation of public hearing procedure under the said notification, if so, the reasons therefore;

(d) whether the time limit for holding the public hearing has been reduced from 210 days to 60-90 days, if so, the reasons therefore;

(e) whether Government have come across any misuse of the said guidelines by State Governements and local authorities when the situation is not conducive to them; and

(f) if so, what are the steps taken by Government to rectify this?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA): (a) and (b) The developmental activities including industrial and construction projects in the Draft Environment Impact Assessment Notification issued on 15th September, 2005 inviting public comments and suggestions have been classified into Category A, Category A/B and Category B based on scale and severity of potential Environmental Impacts at the proposed location.

(c) The provisions for public hearing procedure in the Draft Environment Impact Assessment Notification has not been relaxed. However, the public consultation process has been structured with clear safeguards against delays.

(d) No, Sir.

(e) No, Sir.

(f) Does not arise.

Shrinking of forests

†3724. MS. SUSHILA TIRIYA:
SHRI MOTILAL VORA:

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) the extent to which the forest area is shrinking each year in the country alongwith the details of area deforested during last five years, State-wise;

(b) the area of land on which plantation has been made to extend forest cover during each year of last three years, State-wise;

(c) whether Government have taken any concrete steps to check the environmental imbalance;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.